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TO: IMMEDIATE WHITE HOUSE//SITUATION ROOM FOR MR MCMANIS, STATE RCI//OPERATIONS CENTER FOR MR FRY, NMCC//ATTENTION CIA REP, TREASURY DEPT//ATTENTION MR JOHN YEO.

WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED

ITEM NO: 4 DATE: 9 APR 74

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: APPARENT ELF ATTACK AT KAGNEW

REF : ASMARA 0236, 090600Z APR 74, CONF; ADDIS ABABA 3988 [redacted] 093408Z APR 74, SECRET

A ROCKET PRESUMABLY FIRED BY ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT (ELF) INSURGENTS STRUCK A VAN AT A FACILITY OF THE KAGNEW COMMUNICATIONS COMPLEX OUTSIDE ASMARA LATE MONDAY NIGHT.

THE ATTACK WOULD MARK THE ELF'S FIRST CALCULATED DEPARTURE FROM ITS POLICY OF AVOIDING US TARGETS. THE INCIDENT MAY BE A ONE-TIME SPECTACULAR, DESIGNED MAINLY TO GAIN PUBLICITY, OR IT MAY PRESAGE A CAMPAIGN AGAINST US INTERESTS. THE ELF MAY HAVE DECIDED THAT SUCH ATTACKS WOULD NO LONGER INVITE PUBLIC CENSURE BECAUSE THE PHASE-DOWN OF KAGNEW HAS RESULTED IN ECONOMIC HARDSHI

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FOR MANY ERITREANS.

THE INSURGENTS IN RECENT WEEKS HAVE CONCENTRATED IN LARGE NUMBERS AROUND ASMARA AND HAVE THE ABILITY TO CARRY OUT SIMILAR ATTACKS AGAINST US AND ETHIOPIAN INSTALLATIONS.

THE ATTACK IS PROBABLY NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE ELF'S DETENTION OF THREE US CITIZENS AND TWO CANADIANS WHOSE HELICOPTER ACCIDENTALLY LANDED IN ELF TERRITORY. A CHANGE IN ELF POLICY TOWARD THE US, HOWEVER, MIGHT REDUCE CHANCES FOR THE EARLY RELEASE OF THE CAPTIVES. E2 IMPDET.A

EXSPECIAL DISTRIBUTION: NEA DIV, NIO [redacted]

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